

November 23, 1999

**MINUTES OF AN ADJOURNED REGULAR
MEETING OF THE TORRANCE CITY COUNCIL**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Torrance City Council convened in an adjourned regular session at 5:33 p.m. on Tuesday, November 23, 1999, in City Council Chambers at Torrance City Hall.

ROLL CALL

Present: Councilmembers Cribbs, Horwich, Lee, Messerlian, Walker
and Mayor Hardison.

Absent: Councilwoman O'Donnell.

Also Present: City Manager Jackson, City Attorney Fellows,
City Clerk Herbers, and other staff representatives.

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Mayor Hardison announced that subsequent to the posting of the agenda on November 18, 1999, the City received a memo from Mobil Oil Corp. requesting Council's concurrence with the monthly testing of the Mobil Oil siren and permission to include the City logo in Community Awareness Campaign literature. As it was necessary for Council to take immediate action in order to provide instruction to the City Manager before the first scheduled test date of December 1, 1999, and use of the City Logo for publication of an ad in the Daily Breeze, a motion was made by Councilman Messerlian, seconded by Councilwoman Cribbs, and passed by unanimous roll call vote to allow City Council to change this item from information to an action item as part of the public session agenda pursuant to Government Code Section 54954.2(b)(2). (absent Councilwoman O'Donnell)

Mayor Hardison announced that subsequent to the posting of the agenda on November 18, 1999, the City received numerous telephone calls from citizens who were unhappy with the traffic calming measures installed in the Walteria area. As it was necessary for the Council to take immediate action in order to provide instructions to the City Manager as to what measures should be taken, if any, in order to alleviate the problems created by the traffic calming measures a motion was made by Councilwoman Cribbs, seconded by Councilman Lee, and passed by unanimous roll call vote to add this item as part of the public session agenda, pursuant to Government Code Section 54954.2(b)(2). (absent Councilwoman O'Donnell)

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Agenda Item 16 was considered out of order at this time.

16. EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 5:35 p.m., pursuant to Government Code Sections 54957.6, 54956.9(a), 54956.9(c), 54957 and 54956.8, the Council recessed into a closed session to discuss matters listed on the meeting agenda.

The Council returned to Council Chambers at 7:08 p.m., and the meeting reconvened in regular agenda order.

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2. FLAG SALUTE/INVOCATION

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Rosie Haq, Torrance Youth Council

Reverend Eric Hoey, South Bay Presbyterian Church, gave the invocation for the meeting.

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Mayor Hardison asked that the meeting be adjourned in memory of Cecelia Deans, a former City employee with the Library Department.

3. AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING/WAIVE FURTHER READING

MOTION: Councilman Lee moved to accept and file the report of the City Clerk on the posting of the agenda for this meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Cribbs and, there being no objection, it was so ordered by Mayor Hardison (absent Councilwoman O'Donnell).

MOTION: Councilman Lee moved that after the City Clerk has read aloud the number and title to any resolution or ordinance on the meeting agenda, the further reading thereof shall be waived, reserving and guaranteeing to each Councilmember the right to demand the reading of any such resolution or ordinance in regular order. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Cribbs and, there being no objection, it was so ordered by Mayor Hardison (absent Councilwoman O'Donnell).

4. WITHDRAWN OR DEFERRED ITEMS

Assistant City Manager Sunshine announced that there was supplemental material available at the meeting on Item 10a (Community Alert Siren Testing) and Item 11b (Newton Street Traffic Calming).

5. COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

City Clerk Herbers announced that applications are being accepted for filling vacancies on various City commissions and invited citizens to call the City Clerk at 618-2870 for further information.

City Clerk Herbers announced that nominations are open for City Council and that legal requirements must be met before funds can be raised or spent towards a candidacy. Citizens are invited to call the City Clerk at 618-2870 for further information.

City Employee Jon Ziegler announced that barrels for the annual Toys for Tots drive will be located in the Main Library, City Hall, and Torrance Police Dept. For information regarding the Spark of Love program, call the Fire Dept. at 781-7000. For other information, call Dave Crespino or Kristine Golia of the Torrance Police Dept. at 328-3456.

6. COMMUNITY MATTERS

6a. RECOGNITION OF DONATIONS TO "THE ATTIC"

Mayor Hardison presented plaques to Alan M. Schwartz and Kristy Hennessey, representing Time Warner Communications, in recognition of their generous donations to "The Attic," a Torrance Teen Center.

7. CONSENT CALENDAR

7a. QUIT CLAIM DEED RE 2837 PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY

Recommendation

Recommendation of the City Manager that City Council authorize the Mayor to execute, and the City Clerk to attest to, a quit claim deed for an easement for sanitary sewer line located on the property at 2837 Pacific Coast Highway.

7b. STORM DRAIN EASEMENT RE 20500 MADRONA AVENUE

Recommendation

Recommendation of the City Manager that City Council approve a storm drain easement to be located on City property at 20500 Madrona Avenue.

7c. INVESTMENT REPORT FOR OCTOBER 1999

Recommendation

Recommendation of the City Treasurer that City Council accept and file the investment report for the month of October 1999.

7d. CONSULTING SERVICES AGREEMENT RE WALTERIA PUMP STATION

Recommendation

Recommendation of Engineering Director that City Council:

- 1) Award a Consulting Services Agreement to Systems Analysis & Integration LLC dba System Integrated (SI) in the amount of \$14,063 to provide professional engineering services and implement programming modifications at Walteria Pump Station;
- 2) Authorize a 5% contingency in the amount of \$704;
- 3) Increase this fiscal year's budget for Technical Support by \$19,000 to cover programming services and contract administration for this project; and
- 4) Authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to execute and attest said agreement.

7e. CONTRACT FOR CONSTRUCTION AND AMENDMENT TO PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT RE WATER MAIN REPLACEMENT 1999-2000

Recommendation

Recommendation of the Engineering Director that City Council:

- 1) Appropriate \$474,000 from Water Fund to Water Main Replacement 1999-2000, Pacific Coast Highway and 190th Street;

- 2) Award the bid to Engineered Plumbing, Inc. in the amount of \$1,687,097 for the construction of Water Main Replacement 1999-2000, Pacific Coast Highway and 190th Street, and reject all other bids;
- 3) Waive a minor irregularity in the Contractor's Bid Proposal;
- 4) Authorize a 5% contingency in the amount of \$84,350 for the Public Works Agreement;
- 5) Approve an amendment to the Professional Services Agreement with ASL Consulting Engineers for an additional \$79,000 for the construction management and inspections services for Water Main Replacement 1999-2000, Pacific Coast Highway and 190th Street; and
- 5) Authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to execute and attest to said Public Works Agreement and amendment to the Professional Services Agreement.

7f. CONTRACT FOR RE-ROOFING PROJECTS AT THE POLICE DEPARTMENT, EL RETIRO LIBRARY AND THE WEST WING OF CITY HALL

Recommendation

Recommendation of the General Services Director that City Council:

- 1) Authorize a contract to Letner Roofing Company, Inc. of Orange, California, in the amount of \$159,446 including sales tax, to furnish all labor, materials and equipment required for the re-roofing projects at the Police Department, El Retire Library and portions of the West Wing of City Hall; and
- 2) Authorize funding of \$13,597 from the 1998-99 Capital Improvement Budget designated for painting of the West Wing and \$15,849 from the funds remaining from previously completed capital improvement roofing projects.

7g. LIBRARY COMMISSION REQUEST TO HOLD MEETINGS AT BRANCHES

Recommendation

The Library Commission requests permission to convene five regularly scheduled meetings at library branches, rather than at Katy Geissert Civic Center Library, in order to receive increased community input and encourage greater public participation.

7h. AGREEMENT RE TRANSIT OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE

Recommendation

Recommendation of the Transit Director that City Council authorize the City Clerk attest to an agreement with Trapeze Software Group, Inc., to provide and install customized software to automate the bidding, dispatching, timekeeping, schedule creation and runcutting for Torrance Transit for the anticipated cost of \$153,440.

MOTION: Councilman Walker moved for the approval of the Consent Calendar as written. The motion was seconded by Councilman Horwich and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Councilwoman O'Donnell).

8. COMMUNITY SERVICES

8a. CITY OF TORRANCE YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PLAN

Recommendation

Recommendation of the Parks and Recreation Director that City Council approve the City of Torrance Youth Employment Plan (YEP) to comply with the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District's Employment of Youth Policy.

Parks and Recreation Director Barnett presented the staff report (per written material of record).

MOTION: Councilman Messerlian moved to approve the City of Torrance Youth Employment Plan (YEP). The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Cribbs and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Councilwoman O'Donnell).

10. PUBLIC SAFETY

10a. COMMUNITY ALERT SIREN TESTING

Recommendation

Recommendation of the Fire Chief that City Council concur with the testing of the Community Alert Siren on the first Wednesday of every month at approximately 11:30 a.m. Further, the Fire Chief recommends that City Council authorize the use of the City Logo and/or a statement of support in all literature used in the Community Awareness Campaign [ADDENDUM REQUESTING ACTION OF COUNCIL].

Fire Chief Bongard presented the staff report (per written material of record).

MOTION: Councilman Walker moved to concur with the staff recommendations. The motion was seconded by Councilman Lee and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Councilwoman O'Donnell).

11. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

11a. RESOLUTION NO. 99-129 RE REGIONAL AIRPORT PLAN

Recommendation

Recommendation of the City Manager that City Council consider a resolution calling for a Regional Airport Plan for Southern California.

Councilman Lee stated that although he had some reservations, as the battle against the Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) expansion is primarily being waged by El Segundo and only indirectly affects Torrance, he would support the resolution because of developments over the last few months. He commented that he believes LAX is an asset to the South Bay and to the City of Torrance and expressed the hope that the matter could be resolved.

While conceding that some cities would be impacted more than others, Mayor Hardison pointed out that the entire South Bay region would be affected by the expansion and voiced support for the development of a Regional Airport Plan. She noted that residents in the north and west areas of the City are already experiencing an increase in noise from LAX air traffic.

Councilman Horwich stated that LAX expansion was clearly a regional concern; that he thought the resolution was very appropriate; and that it was time to act in unison to try to address the situation.

RESOLUTION NO. 99-129

A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR A REGIONAL AIRPORT PLAN FOR SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

MOTION: Councilman Messerlian moved for the adoption of Resolution No. 99-129. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Cribbs and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Councilwoman O'Donnell).

11b. NEWTON STREET TRAFFIC CALMING

Recommendation

[ADDENDUM ITEM] Recommendation of the Planning Director and Police Chief that City Council retain the current installations and make minor modifications to the traffic calming plan in south Torrance.

In a slide presentation, Planning Director Gibson discussed the traffic calming measures that were implemented on November 16, 1999, in the Walteria area and the public's response to them. He reported that the Planning Department had hosted two neighborhood meetings the previous day; that the discussion had focused on diverters installed at 242nd Street and Ocean and diverters and directional restrictions implemented at Newton Street/244th and Ocean; and that residents had expressed concerns about the increase in traffic on Neece and Ocean Avenues and the erratic behavior of drivers being diverted from Newton Street. He stated that, while staff believed that the traffic calming measures were effective in dealing with the problem of cut-through traffic, some modifications might be needed in order to address the problems that have arisen, and outlined the options recommended by City staff as well as those suggested by residents.

In response to Councilman Horwich's inquiry, Fire Chief Bongard advised that as the streets are currently configured, Fire Department vehicles would have to jump curbs in some areas or go around the block in order to gain access, but added that the modifications being proposed by staff would take care of the problem.

Street Services Director Bell confirmed that there was a problem with trash pick-ups on Ocean Avenue making it necessary for crews to manually pull trash barrels over to the east side of the street at approximately five residences.

Commenting on the complexity of the traffic calming plan, Councilman Horwich stated that he was not sure he understood all of its ramifications at the time it was approved and that he believed that it was not working. He expressed his preference that

the entire plan be reconsidered and proposed resubmitting it to the Traffic Commission, asking that they report back to the Council within 90 days.

Noting that he had reviewed the videotape of the August 10, 1999, Council meeting where the traffic calming plan was approved, Councilman Walker stated that there was discussion at the meeting regarding the Council's ability to review the situation once the plan was implemented and the ease with which elements of the plan could be adjusted or removed entirely should it become necessary. Commenting on the widespread negative response to the plan since its implementation, he stated that he believed that everything should be removed and that staff should go back to the drawing board and perhaps proceed a little slower in making adjustments in order to ascertain what will work in the area. He voiced his opinion that ultimately something would have to be done on Hawthorne Boulevard in the Waltheria area to relieve the problems.

Responding to questions from Councilmembers, Project Manager Sedadi discussed the feasibility of implementing some of the options suggested by residents, including blocking off the median on Hawthorne Boulevard at 242nd Street and increasing the capacity of the northbound left turn lane at Hawthorne Boulevard and Pacific Coast Highway; and reported on the license plate survey that was conducted to determine the scope of the problem of cut-through traffic.

Councilman Messerlian commented that, when the Council approved the implementation of the traffic calming measures to relieve longstanding problems on Newton Street, they never intended to create the problems that have ensued or divided the community. He stated that he had always maintained that the solution must come from people who live in the neighborhood and was pleased that many of residents had expressed their opinions but suggested that if the Council had heard from more of them when the plan was initially considered, some of these problems might not have occurred.

Mayor Hardison asked staff to address the contention that residents were not properly notified, and Planning Director Gibson outlined the notification process, indicating that approximately 700 notices were mailed out, and in some cases hand delivered by staff to residences and businesses in the affected area, notifying them of community meetings/public hearings in March, April, June, August and October of 1999.

Noting that some of the residents on Newton Street were feeling ostracized, Mayor Hardison asked that their neighbors not fault them for trying to solve a problem. She indicated that all the correspondence that had been received, either by e-mail or by letter, would be made part of the public record.

Mayor Hardison stated that she also had reviewed the videotape and minutes of the August 10 Council meeting and found no mention of the fact that a dead end on Ocean Avenue would be created and that she probably would not have voted to approve the diverter at 242nd Street and Ocean if she had realized it would cause a dead end/no outlet situation.

Mayor Hardison outlined the procedure for the public input portion of the meeting, explaining that residents most directly affected would be invited to speak first.

Ms. Tina Cernansky, 24219 Ocean Avenue, submitted a letter for the record and stated that she was very unhappy with the traffic calming plan and believed that it merely diverted the problems from Newton Street to her street.

Indicating that she is a heart patient, Ms. Shay Redmond, 24605 Ocean Avenue, expressed concerns about being able to get out of the neighborhood quickly in the event of medical problems. She suggested the possibility of installing speed bumps on Newton Street to slow traffic. Mayor Hardison explained that Newton Street is classified as a collector street and that it is the City's policy not to use speed bumps on collector streets.

Ms. Suzanne DeHart, 24219 Ocean Avenue, submitted additional petitions, bringing the total to 1465 signatures, in opposition to the traffic calming plan and two affidavits concerning an incident with a trash truck.

Dr. Laura DenBlaker, 24216 Ocean Avenue, commented on the difficulty the plan has created for clients attempting to enter and exit her business on Pacific Coast Highway, between Ocean Avenue and Neece Avenue, as well as problems she has encountered trying to move through her own neighborhood.

Mr. Russell Bilodeau, 24229 Ocean Avenue, expressed concerns about the safety of children at Walteria Park and requested that the diverters be removed in that area.

Mr. Trent Plungas, 24243 Ocean Avenue, stated that it was too soon to abandon the traffic calming plan in which so much time and money had been invested; related his observations that people were becoming accustomed to the changes and that traffic was improving; and voiced support for staff's recommendation to make minor modifications to the diverters. He noted that it was very easy to obtain signatures on petitions from confused and angry motorists and maintained that people stopping them to solicit signatures contributed to the problem.

Mr. Taron James, 24240 Ocean Avenue, commented on the damage the diverters could cause to fire trucks driving over them and how the response time of safety personnel would be increased.

Mr. David Lally, 24228 Los Codona Avenue, stated that the underlying premise of the plan, that cut-through drivers would eventually realize that the area is a maze and stop using it as a shortcut, was flawed because it assumes that it is always the same people cutting through the neighborhood. He expressed concerns that the barriers encourage people to drive down alleys, creating a dangerous situation for children playing near large trash cans that could hide them from view. He indicated that he and many of his neighbors had not received notification of the neighborhood meeting held on March 17, 1999. Mayor Hardison noted that she had received calls from people in April regarding this problem and had checked and found their names on the notification list.

Ms. Michelle Turman, 24045 Neece Avenue, #21, commented on the difficulties she and her brother had encountered trying to get to school safely and on time since the plan's implementation and worried that her brother might be hit by a confused motorist when playing at Walteria Park.

Mr. Gary Ventre, 24234 Los Codona Avenue, related problems he was having transporting his children to their schools (South High and Riviera School) and asked that the diverters be removed as soon as possible.

Mr. Danny Holm, 24215 Los Codona Avenue, described the circuitous route his wife must now travel to take his daughters to Richardson Middle School and contended that the barriers had not solved any problems and only diverted traffic from Newton to other streets and should be taken down immediately.

Ms. Kit Turman, 24605 Neece Avenue, #21, reported that the plan had made it necessary for school buses to be re-routed onto main highways, making the ride to school longer and more dangerous for neighborhood children.

Mr. Tim McDannold, 24065 Neece, #9, recommended that the traffic calming measures be immediately dismantled and that a committee of Waltheria residents be formed to come up with an appropriate solution for traffic problems in the area.

Mr. Raymond Dracoules, 3802 W. 242nd Street, expressed his opinion that the solution to the problem of cut-through traffic was to make improvements so that it is easier for people to travel up and down Hawthorne Boulevard rather than constructing barricades and dividing the Waltheria neighborhood. Mayor Hardison explained that Hawthorne Boulevard, north of Pacific Coast Highway, is controlled by Caltrans and that they have not been amenable to the City's suggestions regarding improvements.

Mr. Paul Jordan, 24263 Neece Avenue, stated that he had personally witnessed several drivers perform unsafe maneuvers in order to go around the diverters and that the only solution was their removal.

Mr. John Howard, 24260 Neece Avenue, related his understanding that the traffic calming plan approved by the Council was the same one that was rejected ten years ago. He stated that staff should be looking at traffic expediting on Hawthorne Boulevard instead of traffic calming on Newton Street and proposed removing the median on Hawthorne Boulevard at 242nd Street and adding a left-turn lane. He also proposed installing cameras for enforcing left-hand turn restrictions at both ends of Newton Street, stating that this was an effective strategy that failed because of lack of enforcement. He conceded that residents on Newton Street had a legitimate concern regarding the safety of their children but maintained that one obvious solution was the installation of sidewalks so that children would have a safe place to walk and skateboard. He contended that the reason that there was so little opposition to the plan when it was approved was that there was no notification of residences or businesses east of Hawthorne Boulevard or north of Pacific Coast Highway.

In response to Mayor Hardison's inquiry, Police Chief Herren stated that the only cameras being used for traffic enforcement of which he was aware, were those used to ticket motorists for running red lights.

Ms. Maureen Moore, 24249 Neece Avenue, stated that the traffic calming measures had ruined the ambience of the neighborhood and only diverted traffic from Newton to other streets in the neighborhood. Noting that Newton is classified as a collector street, she suggested re-paving the street to take care of the potholes and possibly even widening it.

Mr. Richard McCleary, 24259 Neece Avenue, commented on the difficulty he was having renting an apartment unit on the back of his property due to the traffic congestion in the area and voiced support for the removal of the diverters.

Ms. Donna Zack, 24243 Neece Avenue, stated that the traffic calming plan has turned the community of WALTERIA into a nightmare, noting that traffic on Neece has gotten so bad that she cannot back out of her driveway in the evening. She submitted a letter from Ynez Moton, 24226 Neece Avenue.

Noting that residents have been greatly inconvenienced and are starting to use the alleys more and more, Mr. Steve Belyea, 24227 Los Codona, requested that the barriers be removed.

Mr. David Robedeau, 24255 Neece Avenue, questioned whether people taking children to school in the neighborhood were counted as cut-through traffic during the license plate survey; voiced his opinion that WALTERIA residents should have the prerogative to use residential streets to transport their children to school rather than having to use Hawthorne Boulevard; and expressed concerns about the notification process, maintaining that property owners frequently fail to notify their tenants.

Mr. Gary Birks, 3770 W. 242nd Street, owner of a business at 242nd Street and Hawthorne Boulevard, maintained that closing off the left-hand turn lane from Hawthorne Boulevard onto 242nd Street would severely damage his business and contended that the only way to relieve the traffic problems in the area was to improve Hawthorne Boulevard.

Ms. Avis Reyes, 24216 Adolph Avenue, expressed concerns for the safety of children visiting WALTERIA Park, explaining that her son was nearly hit twice by vehicles speeding through alleys on his way to the park. She stated that traffic has been a concern on Newton Street for at least 50 years and that residents who purchased there should have been aware of the problems.

Dr. John Aganost, 4022 W. 242nd Street, pointed out that traffic studies have indicated that Newton Street, although classified as a collector street, is carrying three times more than the volume of traffic it was designed to handle. He commended staff for their efforts and stated that he had been prepared to urge the Council to give the plan a little more time but in view of the largely negative comments expressed at this meeting, he had decided instead to offer an alternative plan which he, along with several other residents, had previously advocated. Using a diagram to illustrate, he described the plan, noting that it was similar to the one implemented except for the elimination of the diverters at Ocean Avenue and 242nd Street.

Mr. David Phillips, 2456 W. 151st Street, a United Parcel Service delivery man, stated that he had observed many large delivery trucks using alleys to travel through the neighborhood since the installation of the diverters, making it particularly hazardous for children who sometimes play there.

Mr. Pat Bresnahan, 24251 Ocean Avenue, urged the Council to give the plan more time, relating his observation that traffic was decreasing with each passing day. He stated that he had had occasion to call 911 on the previous day and reported that the

ambulance, fire truck and paramedics responded within minutes and seemed to have no problem gaining access.

Ms. Sherida Dunfee, 24252 Neece Avenue; Kathy Howard, 24260 Neece Avenue; and Julie Stembridge, 24263 Neece Avenue, advocated the immediate removal of the diverters.

Ms. Moniqua Christensen, 24235 Los Codona Avenue, indicated that she had chosen not to attend previous hearings on this matter because of her disappointment at the outcome of the Begonia Farm hearings.

For purposes of clarification, Mayor Hardison noted that the Begonia Farm project will have no outlet on Newton Street and asked speakers to confine their remarks to the issue at hand.

Ms. Christensen recommended widening Hawthorne Boulevard by taking away parking and narrowing the median and suggested taking out the diverters and using the money to fix potholes and to install sidewalks. She asked the City to reconsider its policy on speed bumps, stating that she thought a few speed bumps installed on Newton would be a great help, and maintained that if school buses were free, there would be fewer parents on the road transporting their children to and from school. While expressing sympathy for Newton residents, she stated that she had paid more money for her property and continues to pay more in property taxes so that she can live on a quiet street.

Ms. Jan McCleary, 24259 Neece Avenue, voiced her opposition to the barriers.

The Council briefly recessed from 9:35 p.m. to 9:45 p.m.

Ms. Mary Beck, 3916 Newton Street, stated that when she bought her home nine years ago, she had no clue about the traffic problems and had tried to sell her home for six years without success. She thanked the Council for recognizing the problems and attempting to do something about them and expressed her belief that, despite the initial confusion, the barricades were working and should remain in place at least until another plan is devised.

Mr. Gaetano Belcore, 14101 Yorba Street, #204, Tustin, representing the Village Center, stated that neither he nor his tenants, some of whom live in the neighborhood, received notification of the traffic calming plan and that consequently business owners were underrepresented at the community meetings/public hearings. He pointed out that residents are not the only people with a stake in this community and that some of his tenants have been at the same location for 25 years and have a huge investment in their businesses. He explained that access to the center was being hindered by the traffic restrictions, with business down as much as 90 percent, and voiced his opinion that the entire plan should be scrapped.

Mr. Arthur Frankel, 24209 Hawthorne Boulevard, an owner of a business at 242nd Street and Hawthorne Boulevard, reported that his business was down 30 percent in one week and questioned whether the traffic calming plan's impact on businesses was taken into account. He requested that the barriers be removed as soon as possible and

advocated the use of speed bumps on Newton Street as a safe, efficient way to reduce speed.

Mr. Jeff Ruben, 24256 Neece Avenue, expressed his opinion that the barriers are clearly not working and that the only way to alleviate the situation was to get Caltrans involved so that the intersection of Hawthorne Boulevard and Pacific Coast Highway can be improved. He maintained that traffic backing up at this intersection because of the way it is currently configured provides a powerful incentive for people to cut through the residential neighborhood.

Ms. Thelma Birks, 3770 W. 242nd Street, voiced her concern that if the City continues to erect barriers that make it inconvenient for her customers to access her business at 242nd Street and Hawthorne Boulevard, at some point they will get tired of it and go elsewhere.

Ms. Ann Ferrelli, 5014 Newton Street, indicated that she received notification of all the community meetings/public hearings and noted that when an issue is important enough, news travels by word of mouth as evidenced by the large attendance at this meeting. She stated that she believed the most weight should be given to the opinions and recommendations of residents who live east of Vista Montana and suggested that the City consider obtaining the property at the southeast corner of Pacific Coast Highway and Hawthorne Boulevard through eminent domain in order to improve the intersection.

Mr. Keith Iaia, 4059 Newton Street, stated that staff could not have designed a more ideal plan to alleviate the problems on his street although he realized that it had caused problems for his neighbors and needs some modification. He urged the Council not to dismantle the entire plan in a knee-jerk reaction and to learn from what has been done so far and make the appropriate adjustments.

Ms. Marlana Harjo, 4090 Newton Street, maintained that people in the area will learn to live with the inconvenience and the extra time it takes to get around the neighborhood and requested that the plan be given a trial period of at least 30 days.

Mr. Armand Rhoden, 3954 Newton Street, contended that if the traffic calming plan is given a little time, it will be successful in reducing traffic and improving safety throughout the neighborhood. He noted that the main objection to the plan seems to be that it is inconvenient and stated that he suspects that many of the 1465 people who signed the petition were part of the cut-through traffic the plan was trying to eliminate.

Ms. Linda Blair, 3341 Cricklewood Street, owner of a business at 24411 Hawthorne Boulevard, stated that was very upset at the prospect of having no parking in front of her business and that she did not understand why Torrance residents were so eager to widen Hawthorne Boulevard in order to speed up Palos Verdes residents' commute through WALTERIA. Noting that her residence is at the corner of Cricklewood and Winlock, she explained that there is no longer any safe way for her to exit the neighborhood when she takes her children to school and contended that the traffic studies were flawed because they categorized parents taking their children to neighborhood schools during morning peak hours as cut-through traffic.

Mr. Nick Bazos, indicated that he operates a beauty salon at 24044 Vista Montana and reported that the traffic restrictions had drastically affected his business

because many of his clients are senior citizens who do not want to drive on Pacific Coast Highway or Hawthorne Boulevard.

While conceding that a lot of people had been inconvenienced, Mr. Ed Tobias, 3904 Newton Street, reported that there has been a dramatic reduction in the number of cars on Newton due to the traffic calming measures and thanked staff for all their hard work. Noting that he has been involved in this issue for the last ten years, he related his belief that if the community works together, they can find a solution that will work for the entire neighborhood.

Mr. Peter Rustin, 4309 Mesa Street, expressed his opinion that notification of community meetings/public hearings needs to be done in a more effective manner and suggested posting signs so that people do not have to rely on mailed notices. He also suggested that the entire plan be scrapped and that less drastic alternatives be considered.

Mr. Craig Matthews, 3634 ½ Newton Street, reported that the traffic calming measures have already had a negative impact on his business at 4127 Pacific Coast Highway and that he believed that the project was totally unnecessary. He stated that in ten years of traveling Newton Street on a daily basis, he had never experienced the high volume traffic that has been reported, even during peak hours.

Ms. Teresa Rankin, 3539 Newton Street, asked that the barriers be removed, explaining that she cannot access her neighborhood school, which is on the same street on the other side of Hawthorne Boulevard. She agreed that there is a problem on Newton Street, especially where the road narrows, and suggested that the entire community share in the cost of adding sidewalks.

Ms. Trudy Ponder, 3815 Newton Street, thanked staff and the Council for their efforts, but stated that the plan that was implemented has caused too much animosity and suggested as an alternative creating a one-way circuit through the neighborhood controlled by left- and right-hand turn restrictions on Hawthorne Boulevard.

Ms. Diane Smith, 24223 Ocean Avenue, reported that the diverter installed at Ocean Avenue and 242nd Street had made it hazardous for her two small children to play in the front yard and commented on how the traffic issue had divided in the community.

Ms. Carrie King, 5126 Pacific Coast Highway, voiced her opinion that putting up barriers is too drastic of a solution and stated that she found it puzzling that diverters are allowed on collector streets while speed bumps are not. She suggested that busing children to school would help cut down on some of the traffic.

Mr. Bob Tapp, 3950 Newton Street, thanked Planning Director Gibson and his staff for their assistance and expressed the hope that an acceptable solution could be found to improve the situation.

Mr. Shawn O'Brien, 3132 Newton Street, stated that he understands why his neighbors are upset as they are getting a sample of what residents of Newton Street have been dealing with for a long time. He questioned whether speed bumps would do any good, pointing out that the large potholes in the street have not slowed anyone down, and maintained that the street is not wide enough for sidewalks.

Mr. Betty Kohler, 3858 Newton Street, commented on the indirect route she must now take to accomplish her daily errands, expressed her opinion that the traffic calming plan was ill-conceived and unsafe, and voiced support for left-hand turn restrictions at both ends of Newton Street. She indicated that she had not received notification of any of the community meetings/public hearings.

Ms. Debbie Curtis, 4172 Pacific Coast Highway, a business owner at the Village Center, stated that she had specifically located at this center because of its easy access and was distressed when the barricades were installed. She maintained that Newton was never intended to be a quiet street where children could play baseball and that it is not fair to cut off one street when it inconveniences so many people.

Ms. Shirley Whitehead, 24004 Vista Montana, commented on the drastic effect the barriers have had on her business and asked that they be removed.

Ms. Pamela Gibson, 23607 "C" Anza Avenue, suggested that existing traffic laws be more aggressively enforced, stating that she had heard differing opinions as to whether the City needs more police officers to do this; related her understanding that cameras are being used in the City of Irvine to enforce left-hand turn restrictions; and commented on traffic problems in other areas of the City.

Mr. Bill Goetz, 25213 Denny Road, indicated that he uses Newton Street on a daily basis and has not observed traffic problems. He noted that traffic has increased on Denny Road, as well as throughout the City, and maintained that it is something that people have to learn to live with.

Mr. Michael Moore, 3208 Danaha Street, stated that the traffic calming plan has divided the Waleria community and made it difficult and hazardous for people who live east of Hawthorne Boulevard to get their children to school. He contended that the real problem is the intersection of Pacific Coast Highway and Hawthorne Boulevard and advocated a more aggressive approach to negotiations with Caltrans, possibly enlisting the aid of Assemblyman George Nakano. As an alternate plan he suggested widening Newton Street and installing sidewalks.

Noting that her neighborhood is also part of Waleria, Ms. Georgeann Earwood, 26302 Delos Drive, maintained that residents east of Hawthorne Boulevard should not be denied access to residential streets west of Hawthorne Boulevard and that the barriers should come down immediately.

Mr. George Acosta, Sr., 4130 Newton Street, urged his neighbors to give the plan a chance, noting that he had personally delivered hundreds of flyers to his neighbors to the east, but that no one ever bothered to attend the meetings. He commented on the time and energy that has gone into this project and requested that the trial period continue for at least six months.

Mr. George Ciampa, 3304 Whiffletree Lane, voiced his belief that the main problem is the intersection of Hawthorne Boulevard and Pacific Coast Highway, admitting that he frequently uses Newton Street and other streets in the area in order to avoid the intersection, and suggested that the median be removed on Hawthorne Boulevard and the intersection improved.

Ms. Barbara Cooke, 2725 Clarellen Street, commented that there are busy streets all over Torrance, that it is totally absurd to try to block them off, and that she resents the fact that she cannot drive down Newton Street to take her children to school.

Ms. Tina Phillips, 3554-A Ward Street, stated that she frequently visits her mother who lives in the Walteria area and is insulted by the barriers and wants them taken down.

Mr. Gene Hauk, 4119 Calle de Primera, applauded the Council's and City staff's efforts to improve the situation, but stated that he was not sure diverters were the answer. Commenting on the petitions, he noted that many of the people who signed them were the target of the plan and related his observation that some of signature gatherers were directing traffic down the alleys.

Mr. Jerry Brannon, owner of Brannon's Custom Drapery Cleaners, 24421 Hawthorne Boulevard, offered a history of traffic problems in the Walteria area and maintained that the traffic calming plan recently implemented was the same deeply flawed plan that was rejected ten years ago. He expressed concerns about the danger posed by vehicles driving down alleys and about the delay in the response time of emergency services.

Mr. Herbert Funk, 4307 Newton Street, provided examples of areas in Torrance where traffic calming measures are working and urged the Council to leave the barriers in place.

Ms. Josey Vanderpas, 4308 Newton Street, wanted to make clear that residents on Newton Street did not devise the traffic calming plan, but had simply asked for some assistance in improving their quality of life. She stated that although the existing plan may not be the perfect solution, it could work with some adjustment and the patience and cooperation of the community and that one week was not enough time to evaluate the situation.

Responding to Mayor Hardison's inquiry, Planning Director Gibson provided clarification of staff's recommendation regarding the installation of additional signage and outlined the process which would ensue should the Council chose to reconsider the entire plan and refer the matter back to the Traffic Commission. He advised that the Planning Department would review the notification process, making sure that business owners and operators are notified so that they can fully participate in the process, but noted that different segments of the community have conflicting priorities and that there must be some give and take for any plan to work. He indicated that six months was a reasonable time frame for the plan to be brought back before the Council.

Councilman Walker commented that in the Council's quest to make things better, they inconvenienced many people and that he favored the removal of all barriers. He voiced his opinion that the ultimate solution rests with the improvement of the intersection of Hawthorne Boulevard and Pacific Coast Highway, allowing traffic to flow more smoothly through the area, and stated that the City might have to look into the possibility of acquiring property at that location through eminent domain.

Councilman Horwich offered the following motion:

MOTION: Councilman Horwich moved to reconsider the entire plan for reasons of safety and convenience in accessing schools, libraries, the park and businesses, with the barriers removed immediately. A task force consisting of people from Planning, Police, and appropriate City staff, the Planning Commission, the Traffic Commission, and a few residents from each of the geographical neighborhoods to be formed by the Mayor and charged with bringing alternative plans to Council within a six-month period. The motion was seconded by Councilman Walker and discussion briefly continued.

Councilman Messerlian noted that the Council had had some reservations about the traffic calming plan when it was approved in August and that unfortunately they had found that plans do not always work in practice as they do on paper. He stated that some way must be found to bring all parties to the table in order to find a rationale solution to the problem and commented on other problems in the Walteria neighborhood.

Councilman Lee thanked staff and the Mayor for their efforts to bring this matter before the Council in such a short period of time. He voiced support for the motion, stating that he did not believe it was fair to solve Newton Street's problems by transferring them to other streets in the area. He expressed the hope that the matter would be returned in time for this Council to take action rather than after new Councilmembers are elected in the spring.

Voicing support for the motion, Councilwoman Cribbs stated that she would like to see the SMART team approach used, where all the various departments are involved in the process, including the Street, Fire and Police Departments, and recommended a more proactive approach with the Torrance Unified School District so that input can be obtained regarding bus routes and scheduling. Commenting on the notification issue, she conceded that business owners and operators are sometimes missed, but pointed out that City Council agendas are available at the public library and suggested that business owners also be proactive and try to keep track of what is going on in the City. She echoed Councilman Lee's comments, commending the Mayor for taking action so that this matter could be addressed at tonight's meeting.

Mayor Hardison commented on the Council's commitment to find a solution for the residents of Newton Street that everyone can live with and emphasized the importance of the community's working together. She stated that it was clear from the comments that action needs to be taken regarding the Hawthorne Boulevard and Pacific Coast Highway intersection, and noting that staff has met with Caltrans on more than one occasion, she suggested the possibility of meeting with them herself. She requested that the Police Department make a conscious effort to increase enforcement of left-hand turn restrictions on Hawthorne Boulevard.

Responding to City Manager Jackson's request for clarification of the motion, Mayor Hardison indicated that the motion calls for the removal of the diverters only and does not affect existing turning restrictions and stop signs scheduled to be installed.

Mayor Hardison called for a vote on Councilman Horwich's motion, and the motion passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Councilwoman O'Donnell).

In response to Mayor Hardison's inquiry, City Manager Jackson reported that the barricades would be removed the following day, but that some remedial work may take a little longer.

Mayor Hardison invited audience members interested in serving on the task force to contact the Mayor's office either by telephone or e-mail.

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The Redevelopment Agency convened at 5:30 p.m. for an executive session, recessing at 7:08 p.m. The meeting was reconvened in regular agenda order at 12:04 a.m. on Wednesday, November 24, 1999, and adjourned at 12:07 a.m.

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15. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

15a. City Manager Jackson expressed his appreciation for the assistance given by all departments regarding the Newton Street Traffic Calming Plan.

15b. Councilman Horwich indicated that the action taken by Council this evening was not meant as a criticism of staff, but was a pragmatic approach to a problem. He wished his grandchild, Melissa Horwich, a Happy Birthday.

15c. Councilman Messerlian thanked staff and the Mayor for their efforts on the traffic calming issue.

15d. Mayor Hardison thanked staff for their efforts on Monday to meet with the neighborhood and to bring forward the item to Council in such a short time.

16. EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 12:07 a.m., November 24, 1999, the Council returned to closed session to continue discussions of items listed on the meeting agenda.

At 12:14 a.m., Wednesday, November 24, 1999, the Council returned to open session at which time City Attorney Fellows announced that by a vote of 6-0, Council authorized him to file an Amicus Brief in the matter of Zelig v. County of Los Angeles, Supreme Court Case No. S081791, a case involving an individual suing the County for negligence and dangerous condition liability because the County did not use a metal detector to screen persons entering the courthouse as the decision might expand municipal liability for criminal assaults that happen on public property.

17. ADJOURNMENT

At 12:15 a.m., Wednesday, November 24, 1999, the Council adjourned to Tuesday, December 7, 1999, at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

**** Adjourned in Memory of ****
Cecelia Deans